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Board of Education Meeting Minutes

Date: March 16, 2018

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Aftercare Conference Room, Chicago, IL

APPROVED: May 18, 2018

IO 1.0 **CALL TO ORDER** by President Heidi Mueller at 9:37 a.m.

1.1 **Roll Call**

1.2. Board Members Present: Heidi Mueller, Patrick Griffin, David Green, and Jennifer Vidis

Board Members Absent: Dr. Tresa Dunbar Garrett and Dr. Heather Dalmage

1.3. Others present: Dr. Sophia Jones-Redmond, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Denean Adams, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh, Director of Special Education; Ricardo Johnson, Director of Career and Technical; Esther Yahnig, Assistant Legal Counsel; and Maurice McAllister, Recorder

AI 2.0 **CONSENT AGENDA**

2.1 **Approval of Agenda**

President Mueller motioned to move the approval of the March 16, 2018 agenda. Member Vidis motioned to approve the agenda and Member Green seconded.

Voice Vote

Aye: Unanimous

Nay: None

Motion Carries

2.2 **Approval of Minutes**

President Mueller motioned to move the approval of the minutes for January 19, 2018. Member Green moved to approve the January 19, 2018 minutes and Member Vidis seconded.

Voice Vote

Aye: Unanimous

Nay: None

Motion Carries

IO 3.0 **Public Participation**

No public comments.

IO 4.0 **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Mueller mentioned that since our last meeting the Department had a sit down meeting with (ACLU) on our Consent Decree; we have narrowed the focus from the prospective of the Federal Judge. We have shown some progress in all areas of the consent decree and at each of our facilities but St. Charles who are lagging behind in certain key areas. The Judge wants to identify four key areas of the Consent Decree that the Department needs to be in compliance. The ACLU has identified the four key areas and as a Department we set down with them to discuss those areas and discuss ways on how we can improve in those focused areas. The key areas were not too much on education but focus on idle time at the schools and use of confinement. This is a complicated process because negotiation comes from the Court Monitors and the Judge, so everyone has an opinion on how the process should go. We came out with a concrete plan but the plan has to be approved by the Judge. The four key areas that were recommended to the judge are not final but the list is:

- Idle time
- Confinement at St. Charles
- Implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Consistent implementation of behavior management strategies

We have a new Superintendent at St. Charles, Mr. John Albright who understands the focus of the Department and who supports the Departments mission. He believes that taking smaller steps help in the big picture and he supports the schools agenda. In addition, a new Administrative Team will be in place at St. Charles by the end of April 2018.

Friends of IDJJ project are underway for getting a 503 tax exempt status so they can accept donations. IDJJ will be receiving awards in April for our role with Storycatchers, Judy Davis is receiving the first every award in her role expanding and partnering with Steppenwolf and CSO. IDJJ is receiving the Government System Partner of the Year Award for our work in enhancing education and positive youth support and improving the lives of kids.

IO 4.1 Board Members Report on First Visit as School Ambassadors

Each board member was asked to bring a report back to the board meeting from their first visit as Ambassador to the school.

Member David Green, Ambassador to Booker T. Washington Alternative High School – IYC Harrisburg, visited the school February 22, 2018. He reported that:

- Harrisburg is one of the most modern facilities and is built like an adult facility;
- The day was great with interactions and tour of the school and facility;
- Lake Land College (LLC) representative were there and he was able to tour the Horticulture, Culinary Arts and Custodian Maintenance programs areas;
- During lunch time, a ceremony was being conducted for Harrisburg staff for raising the graduation rate by 22% since the start of radPoint/Connexus in one year;
- The graduation ceremony had 11 youth that graduated and 9 were present and LLC had 1 present; and
- The overall feeling is that the school is doing a great job and the staff has lots of comradery; positive things going on at the school.

Member Patrick Griffin, Ambassador to Maya Angelou Alternative High School – IYC Warrenville, visited the school February 28, 2018. He reported that:

- He talked directly with Principal Nelson and commended her on having a bulletin board to communicate information and a suggestion box for feedback;
- He felt that being introduced randomly was good;
- He spoke with the youth and gave advice; he values being able to communicate with the youth;
- Toured the school on Wednesday; no computer day;
- The kids pushed back from no computer usage;
- One class turned into a discussion on computer usage, they wanted computers and not teachers;
- He helped the youth to see that some things cannot come from the computer like, social interaction;
- In seeing the piano he felt there should be a music appreciation teacher because music is important to development; and
- He felt that music classes and instruction would be useful for the school.

Member Jennifer Vidis, Ambassador to Samuel Sublett Alternative High School – IYC St. Charles, visited the school February 16, 2018. She reported that:

- This was her first visit to the school;
- The facility was an amazing site but decaying buildings are depressing; has tons of unused space;

- Did not tour the living arrangements;
- There is a challenge at St. Charles with lack of staff;
- Some youth were coming to school;
- New teacher was on site;
- Visited on a Friday and there was a video presentation on Martin Luther King Day;
- The Principal was very busy running around all day;
- Had nice conversation with staff and security;
- Kids were not shy to talk about their concerns;
- Incredible resource center ;
- Great construction trade location;
- Horticulture program in place;
- Lake Land College Instructors were great;
- Some youth were working on their GED;
- Grounds are incredible for activities;
- Willing to lobby for others to help;
- No janitorial or cleaning services at the school; and
- Want a follow up visit.

Dr. Jones-Redmond thanked each of the members for reporting back to the board on your first visit as Ambassadors and added that Dr. Heather Dalmage visited Thurgood Marshall Alternative High School – IYC Chicago on February 5, 2018 and Dr. Teresa Dunbar Garrett has to connect with Glencliffe Academy Alternative High School – IYC Pere Marquette. Our goal is to have the facility center around the school instead of vice-versa.

President Mueller mentioned that House Bill (HB) 5005 is being proposed to change existing law to more accurately reflect our unique educational environment. This HB will improve the hiring process for teachers and establish comparable salaries to improve teacher recruitment and retention.

IO 5.0 SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Jones-Redmond thanked Member Heather Dalmage and Member Jennifer Vidis for their support to the School Board Policy Subcommittee.

IO 5.1 School Board Policy Plan Update

Esther Yahnig, Assistant Chief Legal Counsel mentioned that the Superintendent along with legal have reviewed and edited Chapter 7 of the school board policies with the subcommittee members Jennifer Vidis and Dr. Heather Dalmage. A copy of the edited policies of Chapter 7 was provided to each of the board members for review along with a draft copy of the table of content. The final review of the policy manual will be provided in its entirety with all chapters before it’s approved. Chapter 6 is the last chapter to review before the final review of the entire policy manual.

IO 5.2 **Curriculum Council Committee**

Dr. Denean Adams mentioned that the Curriculum Council Committee was created for teachers and leaders to provide support and resources for all district-wide teachers to contribute and enhance the Blended Learning instruction inclusive of small group and individual instruction. This is an opportunity for staff to share with their peers on what they are doing and ultimately provide best practices across the school district. The Curriculum Council meets monthly with the goals of providing successful education for youth; support and leadership of staff; improve climate and culture of the school. The council is composed of Special and Regular Education Teachers, the School Resource Coordinators, in addition to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Director of Special Education. The next meeting is a video conference and the key components for this meeting will include: literacy; monitor youth progress; grades; and professional development around literacy. The teachers help with ideas on workshops for the youth and best practices across the district.

Dr. Jones-Redmond mentioned that the Principals of the school have handpicked the members on the Council. Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh started this Curriculum Council and Dr. Denean Adams has taken over the Committee.

IO 5.3 **School District Staffing**

Dr. Jones-Redmond mentioned that the School District is beginning to post 9 month positions at St. Charles to attract teachers who are on the traditional 9 month school schedule verses the 12 month. In our efforts to speed up the background process, the Department has a designed background person that works directly with the DJJ requests only. In addition, the Department hired a Human Resource (HR) Manager to oversee HR operations across the Department and a Chief Financial Officer that would oversee all financial and budget obligations with DJJ. In our efforts to capture qualified teaching staff, we secured a booth at Roosevelt University Career Day – Dr. Denean Adams and Mr. Laurence Roper will provide recruitment support at this event.

IO 5.4 **Vocational and Post-Secondary Programming across the School District Update**

Mr. Ricardo Johnson mentioned that the ACT KeyTrain Curriculum was piloted at Booker T. Washington and Samuel Sublet schools as a supplemental tool to strengthen the core academic and CTE-related skills of their students. He prepared ACT KeyTrain Professional Development materials and facilitated workshops with each principal. Each principal were asked to create an action plan for implementation of the ACT KeyTrain curriculum rollout. Mr. Johnson is currently in discussion with the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), who teaches students how to develop a viable business opportunity, market it, create a business plan, and compete in national competitions. Students maintain

all ownership rights to their material. The launch of the program is subject to the future employment of a Career and Technical (CTE) Teacher at each school. In addition, courses in computer technology Microsoft Office is something that can be offered and which will allow students to develop the basic technical skills required to be successful in today's global market. Again, as the CTE teachers are hired they will be able to teach the subject and give the certifications to the students.

IO 5.5 January and February Special Education Reports

Dr. Jones-Redmond presented the statistical data for Dr. Bethel-Leitschuh. She mentioned that we are maintaining our special education program at IDJJ. Our enrollments are fluctuating and over half of our population has an IEP. Dr. Leone, IDJJ Court Monitor reported our Special Education program incompliance because of all the work put into the special education program. A total of eight (8) annual reviews, IEP, and re-evaluation meetings were conducted. Booker T. Washington and Samuel Sublett schools were either 30 or 60 days out of compliance on IEP. Maya Angelou and Booker T. Washington Special Education Resource Coordinators are acting as case managers at Samuel Sublett to correct the delay in meeting the youth's anniversary timelines. IDJJ staffing issues should be corrected by April 2018 to regain appropriate compliance status.

IO 5.6 January and February Principal Data and Education Reports

Dr. Jones-Redmond mentioned that the graduations at a glance reflects our current GED Testing and success rates district-wide. Who determines that a youth takes the GED; the youth coming in our school district must be at least 17 years old and have less than 5 credits during enrollment. We are seeing a decrease in the number of high school diplomas issued thus far, this is largely due to the increase in GED rates and with blending learning cutting down the number of days youth are on the computer. Our high school graduation diplomas have decreased in 2018 compared from previous year.

IO 6.0 BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Next step as School Ambassadors is to continue to communicate with the Principal. The Principals were asked to share upcoming events with you and to use you as a guest speaker during their graduations.

IO 7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 12:17 pm